

Country Report:

Australia

International Survey *of* Principals Concerning Emotional *and* Mental Health *and* Well-Being

2009



International Survey *of* Principals Concerning Emotional *and* Mental Health *and* Well-Being

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Conducted by

International Association of Child
and Adolescent Mental Health
and Schools (Intercamhs)

Country Report:

Australia

with the

International Confederation
of Principals (ICP)

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Summary of major findings

1 The link and those in need	Almost all the principals (94%) believe that emotional/mental health and well-being are “very important” for academic achievement. The majority (70%) estimate that up to 20% of their students need prevention or intervention services. This estimate is consistent with other Australian research.
2 Major student issues	Among <u>students</u> , principals identify family dysfunction or other family problems, bullying and harassment, impulse control and anger management and as the top four emotional/mental health and well-being issues. ¹ In their own words, principals emphasize that the most important issues they face in their work are awareness of issues, identification and access to services, and communication in the educational environment.
3 Major staff issues	Among <u>staff</u> , principals report that stress, anxiety, and depression are the major emotional/mental health and well-being issues, and also stress the identification of problems, communication and building a supportive environment. Principals generally rate the emotional and mental health and well-being issues for <u>staff</u> lower than they do for student issues.
4 Ministry of Education policies	Principals see a need to increase and strengthen Ministry of Education policies with regard to both student and teacher emotional/mental health and well-being through schools. ² Those principals who report that there are no national policies for either students or teachers also report a greater need for educational materials and resources.
5 Impact of student family income	Lower student family income levels are associated with higher ratings of importance that principals place on student and staff issues. They are also associated with Australian principals’ ratings of importance for resources to address several issues, including creating a whole-school approach to address mental health and having a basic understanding of risk and protective factors.
6 Need for resources	Principals report that training programs and materials for their staff, especially in the form of DVDs and videos and Web-based courses, as well as exchange with other principals and experts, would be most useful. Principals want resources, training, and materials to address nine critical areas of a whole-school approach, including support to students and families in distress, effective prevention and promotion strategies, and teaching emotional and social learning skills.

Introduction

This report provides the Australian data from the recent International Survey of Principals Concerning Emotional and Mental Health and Well-Being (http://www.intercamhs.org/html/principals_survey.html). The International Alliance for Child and Adolescent Mental Health and Schools (Intercamhs), with EDC's Health and Human Development Division serving as Intercamhs Secretariat, and the International Confederation of Principals (ICP) conducted a global, web-based survey of school principals. The purpose of the global survey was to understand:

- if educators see a link between emotional/mental health and academic achievement;
- the major emotional and mental health/well-being issues facing students and staff; and
- policies, professional development, and other resources that principals say they need to respond.

For more on the collaboration between Intercamhs and ICP, please see Appendix I.

Sample

Principals were recruited mainly through the four national Australian Principals Associations, the Australian Principals Association Professional Development Council (now Principals Australia), and contacts made by Intercamhs members in Australia. The full international sample represented 1,215 principals: 270 were from Australia. Table A compares the characteristics of the global and Australian samples.

Table A. Sample characteristics for the Australian responses and the overall global dataset (in parentheses)

Characteristic	Australia	Global	Characteristic	Australia	Global
Income level of families			Grade level of school		
Low income / poverty	59 (21.9%)	278 (22.9%)	Pre-k and elementary	136 (50.4%)	619 (50.9%)
Lower middle class	96 (35.6%)	403 (33.2%)	Middle and high school	87 (32.2%)	326 (26.8%)
Middle class	88 (32.6%)	424 (34.9%)	Other	47 (17.4%)	270 (22.2%)
Upper middle class	26 (9.6%)	97 (8.0%)	TOTAL	270 (100%)	1215 (100%)
High income	1 (0.4%)	13 (1.1%)	Gender of principal		
TOTAL	270 (100%)	1215 (100%)	Female	132 (49.8%)	684 (57.0%)
Size of school			Male	133 (50.2%)	515 (43.0%)
Very small (< 151)	41 (15.2%)	254 (20.9%)	TOTAL	265 (100%)	1199 (100%)
Small (151-400)	81 (30.0%)	345 (28.4%)	Number of years as principal - current school		
Medium (401-800)	77 (28.5%)	324 (26.7%)	1 to 3	104 (38.7%)	442 (36.4%)
Large (801-1200)	51 (18.9%)	186 (15.3%)	4 to 6	74 (27.5%)	306 (25.2%)
Very large (> 1200)	20 (7.4%)	106 (8.7%)	7 to 10	56 (20.8%)	228 (18.8%)
TOTAL	270 (100%)	1215 (100%)	11 to 14	30 (11.2%)	138 (11.4%)
Student diversity			15 or more	5 (1.9%)	100 (8.2%)
Very diverse	69 (25.6%)	332 (27.3%)	TOTAL	269 (100%)	1214 (100%)
Diverse	29 (10.7%)	146 (12.0%)	Number of years as principal - total		
Mixed	59 (21.9%)	335 (27.6%)	1 to 3	61 (22.7%)	269 (22.2%)
Similar	58 (21.5%)	234 (19.3%)	4 to 6	54 (20.1%)	253 (20.8%)
Very similar	55 (20.4%)	168 (13.8%)	7 to 10	58 (21.6%)	277 (22.8%)
TOTAL	270 (100%)	1215 (100%)	11 to 14	48 (17.8%)	195 (16.1%)
			15 or more	48 (17.8%)	220 (18.1%)
			TOTAL	269 (100%)	1214 (100%)

Nearly 70% of the respondents estimate that the families of their student population are of a lower-middle class or middle class income level. Nearly 60% of the schools (N=158) the principals lead, are small-to-medium in size in terms of pupil numbers (150-800). The respondents' schools represent a broad range of very diverse, diverse and mixed student populations, with approximately 20% being in each of these categories. Nearly 88% work in co-educational schools. There are approximately even numbers of male and female respondents and a fairly even spread of years as principal, with 23% working in their first three years. Interestingly 38% are in their first three years at their current school. With over 50% of respondents having more the 7 years experience it can be expected that they have well developed knowledge of both their profession and its challenges.

Overview of findings

EDC analyzed the full sample and individual country samples by reporting basic frequencies and by conducting correlational analysis, chi-square tests, and ANOVAs to examine the relationships between the various sample characteristics (described in Table A above) and the dependent variables of interest. While some bias may have been introduced due to the principals' self-selection to participate, the high number of responses and the remarkable consistency in their recognition of a link between mental health and education, as well as their accurate estimation of the proportion of students requiring prevention or intervention services, suggest that addressing mental health through schools has broad support.

There are several important findings:

- Very similar to the global dataset, Australian principals see emotional/mental health and well-being of students to be “very important” for academic performance (94%).
- In terms of importance, “family dysfunction or other issues” is rated higher than any other issue in both the Australian and global samples. The top three staff mental health issues (stress, anxiety, and depression) that Australian principals identify are the same as in the global dataset.
- The issues Australian principals report as most important in their work as it relates to students are nearly identical to those in the global sample. Issues such as awareness and identification of those in need and communication within the educational environment are cited just as often by principals in Australian sample and the global dataset.
- As in the global dataset, principals rate mental health and well-being issues of staff as less important (2.56) on a five-point scale than those of students (3.12).
- Australian principals report the existence of more Ministry of Education policies to address student and teacher general and mental health through schools. This is particularly noteworthy in the case of student mental health through schools, for which Australian principals are 50% more likely to report the existence of a MOE policy.
- Lower student family income levels are associated with higher ratings of importance that principals place on student and staff issues. This trend is similar in both the Australian sample and the global dataset.
- Regardless of years of experience, principals strongly indicate that they need professional development to address a variety of issues, such as student and family supports for those with more serious problems and programs and strategies to teach students emotional and social learning skills. These results are very similar to the global data.

For discussion questions corresponding to each of the six major findings, please see Appendix II.

The evolution of school mental health in Australia

Australia is a federation of eight states and territories. Education and Health are shared responsibilities between state and territory governments and the federal government. Nationally Australia has adopted an innovative strategy to mental health policy making over last 15 years involving: an integrated approach to mental health promotion and prevention and early intervention³; the separate conceptualizations of mental health, mental illness/disorder and mental health problems; and a population health orientation with its focus on the value of securing a benefit from interventions for the population as a whole as well as responding to those in greatest need. Within this policy context for school mental health, there was a shift to include a focus on the population of a school community as well as traditional mental health service delivery. This resulted in the funding of a national secondary school mental health promotion pilot project MindMatters in 1997.⁴ In 2000 a national dissemination of MindMatters began with additional foci in subsequent years including students with high support needs, materials focused on the community context, indigenous students, student participation and the mental health needs of staff. In 2006 an initiative for focusing on primary schools, KidsMatter began.⁵ Different states and territories have enhanced national initiatives with specific strategies targeted to match their state based policies and programs.

When trained, school staff can recognize student problems early, gaining the necessary services (when accessible) for families to prevent and reduce later harm. By creating positive environments, schools can foster emotional and mental health and well-being among their students and staff. Through partnerships among practitioners, educators, policymakers and academics, the positive linkages between health and education may be strengthened. The findings of this report on school mental health exist within a supportive educational policy context. The Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians focuses on high quality schooling for all young Australians and identifies the necessity to build confident individuals who have amongst other attributes:⁶

- a sense of self-worth, self-awareness and personal identity that enables them to manage their emotional, mental, spiritual and physical wellbeing
- have a sense of optimism about their lives and the future
- develop personal values and attributes such as honesty, resilience, empathy and respect for others
- have the knowledge, skills, understanding and values to establish and maintain healthy, satisfying lives
- relate well to others and form and maintain healthy relationships
- embrace opportunities, make rational and informed decisions about their own lives, and accept responsibility for their own actions.

Australian school principals demonstrate in the findings reported here their understanding of the need to attend to these aspects of schooling and to support their staff to develop “the capacity to transform the lives of students and to inspire and nurture their development as learners, individuals and citizens.” More specifically the Australian Secondary Principals Association has issued a position paper on student wellbeing which concludes, “schools are rightly seen as the logical - if not the only – common, assured delivery point for wellbeing initiatives.”⁵

1. The link and those in need

Almost all the principals (94%) believe that emotional/mental health and well-being are “very important” for academic achievement. The majority (70%) estimate that up to 20% of their students need prevention or intervention services. This estimate is consistent with other Australian research.

The survey asked principals to what degree they see a link between student emotional/mental health and well-being and achievement in the classroom. Figure 1 (a) illustrates that nearly 94% of the Australian sample believes that this link is “very important.” Responses are consistent, regardless of the number of years of experience that principals have in their role or in their estimates of the diversity and family income of their students.

Figure 1 (b) below reports Australian principals’ estimates of the percentage of their students who they believe are in need of services. 70% of Australian principals estimate that close to one in five of their students is in need of prevention or intervention services. Overall, estimates in the Australian sample are relatively comparable to the global dataset.

Other Australian and global research has arrived at similar findings to this survey, reporting that approximately one in five children live with a diagnosable mental health disorder.⁸ The majority of these children have not had access to specialist services.⁹

Figure 1 (a). Principals’ average rating of importance of emotional/mental health and well-being in terms of student performance and academic achievement

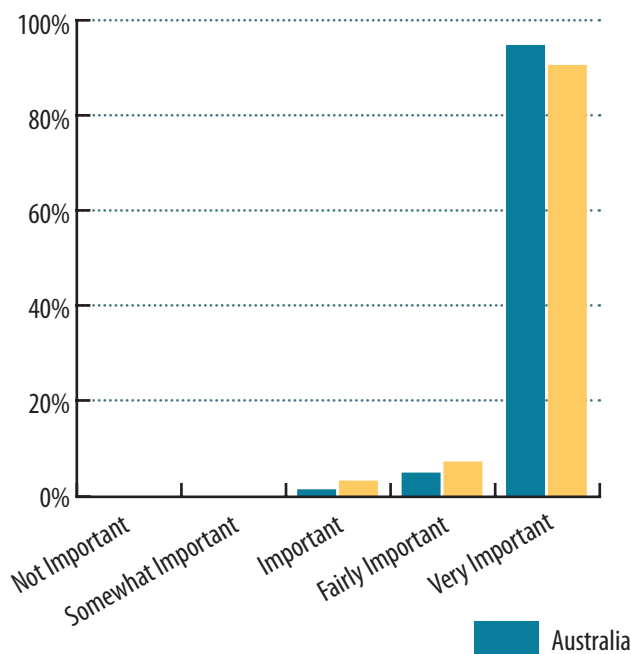
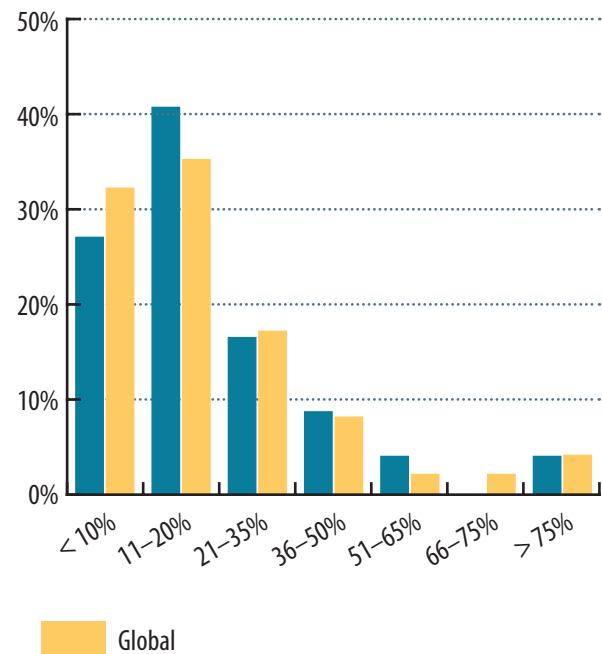


Figure 1 (b). Principals’ estimate of the percentage of their students needing services



Voice from the field

“Schools are faced with a range of mental health and student wellbeing issues on a daily basis and wellbeing impacts directly on student development and achievement and general happiness. Teachers need basic skills and access to more specialist resources. We also need to keep in mind that this is a community issue... schools belong within their local communities and need to be resourced and supported by their local communities.”

2. Major student issues

Among students, principals identify family dysfunction or other family problems, bullying and harassment, impulse control and anger management and as the top four emotional/mental health and well-being issues.¹ In their own words, principals emphasize that the most important issues they face in their work are awareness of issues, identification and access to services, and communication in the educational environment.

On a scale of 1 (“Not Important”) to 5 (“Very Important”), principals rated the importance of 16 issues, presented in a checklist. These 16 issues came from the international literature regarding the prevalence and importance of specific conditions. Australian principals rank family dysfunction, bullying and harassment, and impulse control as the three leading issues they need to address among their students.¹ This ranking differs significantly from the global sample in that the first ranked Australian priority issue, family dysfunction was ranked fourth in the global sample.

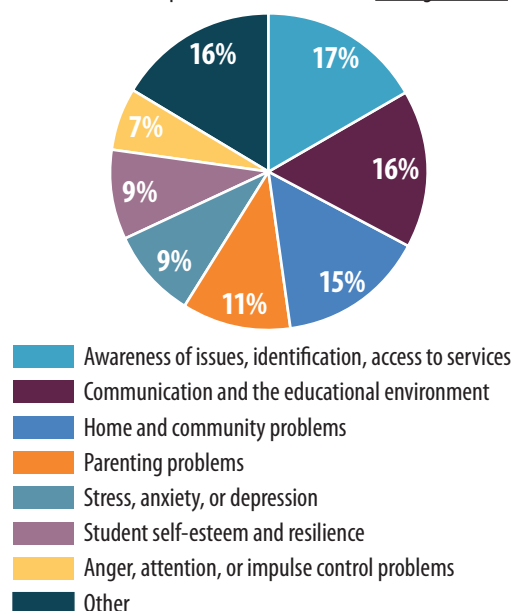
In addition to the checklist, the survey asked principals to respond in their own words to what they see as the most important emotional and mental health issues to address for their students. Figure 2 (b) shows that the main issues for Australian principals are awareness and identification of issues and access to services, communication within the educational environment, and home and community problems.

Figure 2 (a). Australian principals’ ratings of major emotional/mental health and well-being issues to address among students, based on average rating (1=Not Important, 5=Very Important) from checklist

Issue	Australia rating	Global rating
1. Family dysfunction or other	4.00	3.89
2. Bullying and harassment	3.83	3.99
3. Impulse control	3.72	3.96
4. Anger management	3.71	3.93
5. Anxiety	3.44	3.38
6. Other behaviour problems	3.30	3.49
7. Stress	3.22	3.29
AVERAGE (ALL ISSUES)*	3.12	3.21

* difference is not significant

Figure 2 (b). Australian principals’ open-ended responses as to their views of important issues to address among students



Voice from the field

“Mental health issues are increasingly taking up time in schools. Frequently it is the school that first identifies a mental issue so they are the first line of identification and support. Sometimes they are the only line of support if parents are unable or unwilling to cope. There are not sufficient resources where there are a number of students with serious mental health issues.”

3. Major staff issues

Among staff, principals report that stress, anxiety, and depression are the major emotional/mental health and well-being issues, and also stress the identification of problems, communication and building a supportive environment. Principals generally rate the emotional and mental health and well-being issues for staff lower than they do for student issues.

As they did for students, principals rated the importance of 11 given issues for staff using the same scale of 1 (“Not Important”) to 5 (“Very Important”). Likewise, in response to an open-ended question, principals shared, in their own words, what they see as the most important emotional and mental health issues to address for their staff.

Figures 3 (a) and (b) show that there is some consistency with the global data in the issues rated as important namely their need to help their staff build resilience and develop coping skills to deal with some of these challenges as well as stress, anxiety and depression. Interestingly, the principals do not perceive the impact of policy (such as inclusiveness without classroom support) and school structural factors (such as large class sizes) as also creating stress for teachers.

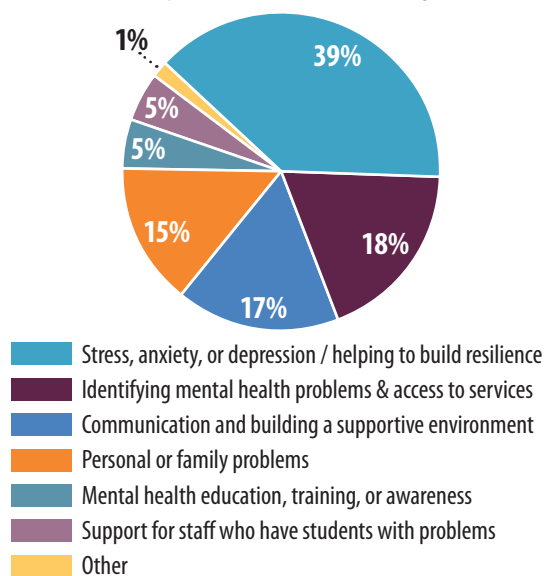
Similar to the global data, 18% of the Australian principals (compared to about 17% of principals in the global sample) cite the importance of identifying and diagnosing staff with mental health problems and connecting them to needed services within the school or externally. In both the global data and Australian sample, principals cited the importance of building an environment where staff members can assist other staff and children to feel safe and supported. Principals feel that establishing this kind of environment requires open and respectful communication among teachers, students, and their families. However, principals in the global and Australian samples rate teacher issues on average as lower in importance than student issues (3.12 versus 2.56). This difference indicates the need to focus on the school as a healthy workplace, given the rights and needs of teachers and the impact of teacher well-being on student performance.

Figure 3 (a). Australian principals’ ratings of major emotional/mental health and well-being issues to address among staff, based on average rating (1=Not Important, 5=Very Important) from checklist

Issue	Australia rating	Global rating
1. Stress	3.64	3.72
2. Anxiety	3.13	3.14
3. Depression	2.89	2.84
4. Bullying and harassment	2.72	2.74
5. Loss and grief	2.67	2.73
AVERAGE (ALL ISSUES)*	2.56	2.61

* difference is not significant

Figure 3 (b). Australian principals’ open-ended responses as to their views of important issues to address among staff



Voice from the field

“Teachers are under incredible pressure resulting from accountability procedures put in place by State and Commonwealth Governments then passed onto systems in the Catholic and independent sectors. Expectations of them in these areas are causing high rates of stress and fatigue.”

4. Ministry of Education policies

Principals see a need to increase and strengthen Ministry of Education policies with regard to both student and teacher emotional/mental health and well-being through schools.² Those principals who report that there are no national policies for either students or teachers also report a greater need for educational materials and resources.

Figure 4 (a) shows that over four out of five Australian principals indicate that Ministry of Education (MOE) policies exist to address students' general health and mental health through schools.² Interestingly while 47% report MOE policies for teacher's health, a slightly greater number (50%) indicate policies about teacher's mental health. Australian principals report the existence of more policies for student and teacher general health and mental health than identified in the global sample. There is also greater certainty about the existence of MOE policies among Australian principals (fewer indicated "Don't Know").

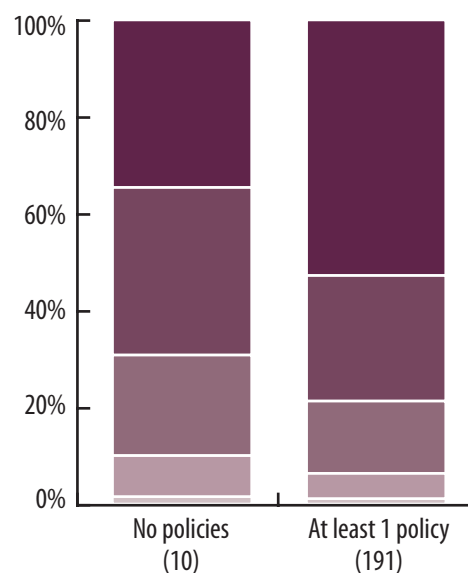
Australian principals' ranking of the need for educational materials for student and staff is higher than the global sample, as shown in Figure 4 (b). The impact of existence of policy could establish the awareness and importance for principals of the area of mental health and well-being. Australian principals who indicate there are no MOE policies are less likely indicate a need for professional development, educational materials, and other resources.

Figure 4 (a). Existence of Australian MOE policies to address health and mental health among students and staff through schools; global data are provided in parentheses

Policy	Yes	No	Don't Know
Student Health Through Schools	84.0% (74.1%)	7.4% (14.1%)	8.6% (11.9%)*
Student Mental Health Through Schools	79.8% (55.4%)	8.9% (27.7%)	11.3% (16.8%)
Teacher Health Through Schools	47.1% (33.5%)	27.6% (42.8%)	25.3% (23.7%)*
Teacher Mental Health Through Schools	50.2% (34.8%)	26.8% (41.7%)	23.0% (23.5%)*

* differences are not significant

Figure 4 (b). Australian principals' ratings of importance of having educational tools, materials, and other resources to address various student emotional/mental health and well-being issues by the number of total policies



Voice from the field

“Governments need to recognise the effect of their intervention on teachers and administrators within the educational system. They fail to recognise that their demands are placing undue and unreasonable expectations on schools and school systems and are creating a less motivated teaching workforce. Governments must stop loading schools with more to do without providing extra effective resources to be able to do it.”

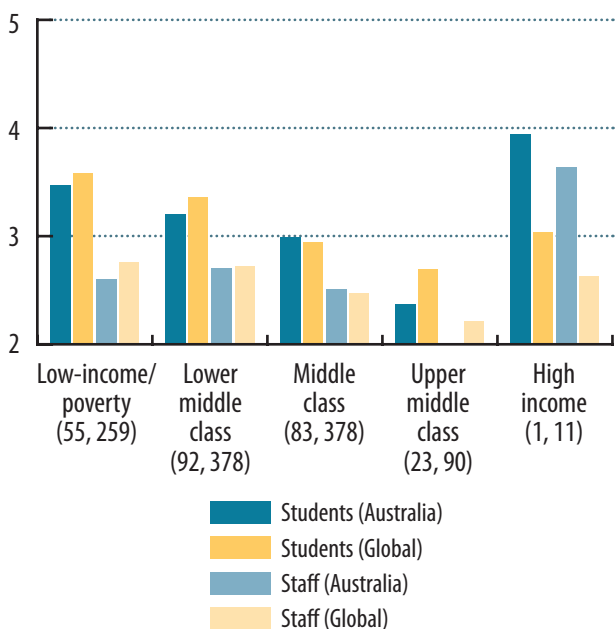
5. Impact of student family income

Lower student family income levels are associated with higher ratings of importance that principals place on student and staff issues. They are also associated with Australian principals' ratings of importance for resources to address several issues, including creating a whole-school approach to address mental health and having a basic understanding of risk and protective factors.

Student family income levels reported by Australian principals are roughly the same as those in the global sample. Figure 5 (a) shows that Australian principals serving students in low-income families indicate the highest mean score for student emotional and mental health issues (3.4).¹⁰ Like the global sample, Australian principals serving upper-middle class families show lower mean scores than the other income groups (the N for the high income group is too low for comparison). Similar to earlier findings presented above, ratings of importance are higher for student issues than for those of staff, though both are affected by student family income level.

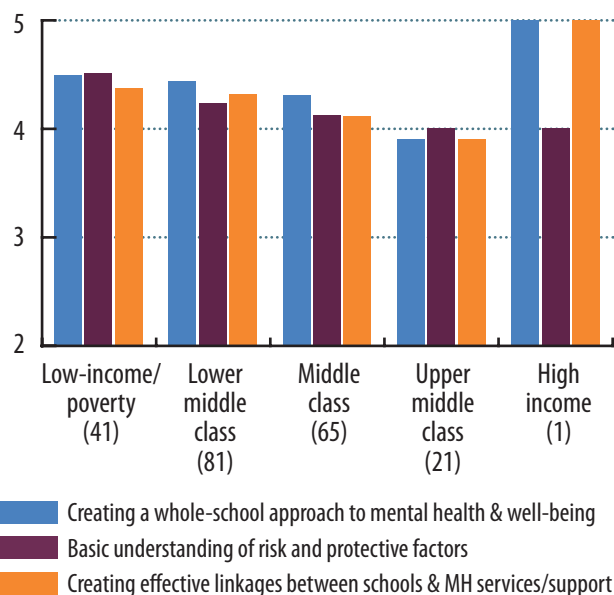
Principals also rated the importance of having additional educational materials, training, or other resources to address a variety of specific emotional/mental health and well-being issues. As in the global dataset, several of these issues show associations with student family income level, as shown in Figure 5 (b). Australian principals serving in schools with lower student family incomes report higher ratings of importance for resources for issues such as “creating a whole-school approach to address mental health and well-being” and “basic understanding of risk and protective factors.”

Figure 5 (a). Australian principals' mean ratings of importance of emotional/mental health and well-being issues for students and staff, by student family income level



(Numbers in parentheses are the N's for Australia and Global respectively)

Figure 5 (b). Australian principals' mean rating of importance of educational materials, training, and resources to address specific issues, by student family income level



Voice from the field

“In small rural communities the entire wellbeing of families is being tested by ongoing drought conditions causing increased financial strain and strain on relationships. We are noticing an increased incidence of family breakdown and this impacts hugely on the emotional state of students. The most dedicated teachers seem to often be those suffering the most.”

6. Need for resources and materials

Principals report that training programs and materials for their staff, especially in the form of DVDs and videos and Web-based courses, as well as exchange with other principals and experts, would be most useful. Principals want resources, training, and materials to address nine critical areas of a whole-school approach, including support to students and families in distress, effective prevention and promotion strategies, and teaching emotional and social learning skills.

When Australian principals were given a series of types of materials or resources and asked to indicate how useful they believed each to be to address emotional/mental health and well-being issues among their students and staff, respondents report that all except a dedicated column in national association newsletters would be “useful” to “very useful.” Still, principals give consistently higher ratings when compared to the global sample, if only slightly higher. In all, respondents feel that training programs and materials for school staff, videos and DVDs, and exchange with principals and experts from around the country would be most useful (4.04, 3.58, and 3.57, respectively). Depending on a school’s preferred way of providing professional development, a variety of formats would be useful.

Figure 6 (a) provides the average ratings for the list of formats offered. When offered a list of issues for professional development and training that principals might want, they gave an average rating of 4.00 or higher on a 5-point scale to 11 of the 13 issues provided, ranging across the continuum from basic understanding of risk and protective factors to how to provide student and family supports for more serious problems. Consistent with Finding 3, principals report that “developing specific mental health policies for staff” is of lowest concern to them.

Figure 6 (a). Australian principals’ average ratings of usefulness of various professional development and educational materials and resources (1 = Not Useful, 5 = Very Useful)

Type of material or resource	Australia rating	Global rating
Training programs and materials for school staff	4.04	3.96
Videos, DVDs	3.58	3.58
Exchange with principals & experts from your country	3.57	3.52
Web-based resources and publications	3.56	3.47
Web-based course or interactive web-based learning material	3.51	3.41
Exchange with other schools and experts internationally	3.49	3.37
Print, how-to manual	3.28	3.27
Dedicated column in ICP/National Association newsletters	2.76	2.70
AVERAGE*	3.47	3.41

* difference is not significant

Figure 6 (b). Australian principals’ average ratings of issues of greatest importance to be addressed through training, educational materials, and resources (1 = Not Important, 5 = Very Important)

Issue or topic	Australia rating	Global rating
Student and family supports for those with more serious problems	4.44	4.42
Knowledge of effective promotion/prevention strategies & their implementation	4.42	4.31
Program/strategies to teach students emotional and social learning skills	4.42	4.31
Creating a whole-school approach to emotional/mental health & well-being	4.36	4.20
How to make early identification of symptoms of mental health problems	4.33	4.25
Building relationships with family members around student mental health	4.29	4.16
Basic understanding of risk & protective factors for mental health & well-being	4.23	4.15
How to create effective linkages between schools & MH services/support	4.22	4.15
Knowledge of prevalence & nature of common mental illnesses in kids	4.15	4.00
Research on link between emotional/mental health & academic performance	4.14	3.94
Integrating emotional/mental health & well-being into school policy/mission	4.03	3.94
Stigma & discrimination related to mental health & how to overcome them	3.95	3.87
Developing specific mental health policies for staff	3.92	3.74
AVERAGE*	4.22	4.05

* difference is not significant

Conclusion and recommendations

The Principals Survey offers data from a sample of Australian principals to begin to understand the issues they see in student and staff emotional/mental health and well-being. The survey results indicate the importance that principals give to the issue of emotional/mental health in relation to academic performance, the high number of students in need of services, and specific areas to address for professional development. Additionally as part of a larger global data set, it offers a valuable base for building on the strengths and strategies of other countries. From the data described in this report it is clear that these issues are of paramount importance to principals, administrators, and all educational personnel.

There are a number of findings within the Australian data that illustrate different perceptions, policies, programs and practices compared to the global data. First, Australian principals rank family dysfunction as the issue of greatest importance for students, whereas it was rated fourth in the global sample. Principals in the Australian sample indicate that more policies for student and teacher general health and mental health exist than in the global sample overall. There is also greater certainty about the existence of MOE policies among Australian principals (fewer indicated “Don’t Know”).

The findings provide valuable guidance to ICP, Intercamhs, and other Australian organizations and professionals for identified follow-up activities. Advocates and others concerned with school mental health should, through these findings, be encouraged to work in close collaboration with principals, researchers, and policy makers to enact more progressive educational policies that use a whole-school promotion and prevention approach and place emotional/mental health and well-being of students and staff higher on the educational agenda. Additionally, these data indicate that Australian principals agree that more child mental health services linked to schools are needed. Moreover, recognizing the school as a workplace and addressing teacher mental health and well-being is an essential step in a comprehensive response.

The data suggest that professional development events, tools, training, and other materials must be developed and made available at the school level. To this end, experience shows that educators and organizations committed to improving child and adolescent mental health are being supported by global knowledge exchange over the internet for reach, delivery, and learning. By capitalizing on new distributed learning technologies for training and expertise, international professional associations can focus on issues of highest need across all income areas. These data can be used as a foundation from which policy makers and educational leaders can work in partnership to achieve positive mental health and enhanced academic outcomes of students in Australian schools. Specifically, the following are recommended:

- Organizations providing educational leadership in Australia are encouraged to use the findings to foster discussion of the issues and findings provided in an effort to advocate for, and plan next steps toward, putting in place needed and effective policies and programs related to school mental health (suggested discussion questions are in Appendix II).
- Organizations involved in school mental health in Australia are encouraged to work at the national level to connect with Intercamhs and ICP, through their Interconnexions project, in providing more educational resources and training activities for school leaders through newsletters, conferences, web sites, and other means.
- Intercamhs and ICP will work to develop a specific plan of action to secure funding that will support development of the needed education and training materials identified through this survey to be adapted and used globally.
- Educational and children’s mental health organizations in Australia should publicize these results broadly within the country to enhance awareness and dialogue, while working to develop a shared language and agenda for school mental health in Australia to support action for change.

References

1. An initial analysis identified drug and alcohol abuse as top priority. Further analysis revealed a different order of priority issues.
2. The responses to this item could refer to national, state or regional policy making as there is national, state and sometimes regional policy making.
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10. The high income score has been disregarded in this analysis due to the low response rate (N=1)

Appendices

Appendix I: ICP and Intercamhs collaboration

What is ICP?

The International Confederation of Principals (www.icponline.org) is the only global school leaders' umbrella professional organization. Its members are the national associations of school leaders. It has developed a purposeful network that develops and encourages opportunities in an inclusive, affiliated democratic manner. The Confederation is non-political and non-sectarian. Its vision is to link and support the international community of school principal organizations to enhance their members' learning and the life opportunities of their students.

What is Intercamhs?

Intercamhs (www.intercamhs.org) is the first and only global organization that promotes the international exchange of ideas and experiences and acts as a forum for researchers, policy makers and practitioners in education and mental health to advance initiatives that benefit the well-being of young people. The primary constituents of Intercamhs are the current 300 members with varying disciplinary backgrounds, as well as the international organizations which collaborate to offer symposia. The Health and Human Development Division (www.hhd.org) at Education Development Center, Inc., serves as Secretariat to Intercamhs. EDC is an international non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing learning, promoting health, and fostering a deeper understanding of the world.

What is the Interconnexions Project?

In 2007, the two organizations joined together to “take actions so schools around the world will increasingly understand the value and importance of teacher and student mental health to successful learning and adopt policies and programs that address the continuum from mental health promotion to prevention of disorders and early intervention.” The agreement to collaborate was based on the recognition that the advocacy of principals in this area is critical to change. Additionally, when trained, school staff can recognize student problems early, gaining the necessary services for students and their families to prevent and reduce later harm. By creating positive environments, schools can foster emotional and mental health and well-being among their students and staff. Through partnerships among practitioners, educators, policy-makers and academics, the positive linkages between health and education can be strengthened.

Appendix II: Discussion questions

Finding 1: The link and those in need

1. What evidence do you see of this link in your school or country? Do others of your staff, your community, and your policy leaders also see the link?
2. What steps can principals take to increase awareness among policy makers, staff, union leaders, parents, mental health providers, community leaders, others? Why is it critical to do so?
3. How do your own countrywide estimates of students requiring prevention or intervention services compare to the survey estimates?
4. What services are available in your school or country? Needed?
5. What different types of programs are needed for all students?

Finding 2: Major student issues

1. Are these issues similar to your experience? If so, in what ways?
2. Are there other issues you see? What are some similarities or differences between the table in Figure 2a and the pie chart in Figure 2b?
3. What actions are you presently taking or might you want to take to address the issues you face?
4. What are a few of the most effective, research-based strategies you know of for specific issues?
5. Where can you turn for assistance and resources?
6. Are these issues common in your school? What role do you think stigma about mental health plays in terms of awareness of mental health problems, identification and diagnosis of those in need, and access to services? How can principals combat stigma?
7. Given the range of issues principals must address, how can student mental health become a higher priority?

Finding 3: Major staff issues

1. Does the ranking of issues above reflect what you see as the major staff issues? If not, what is different and why?
2. What are some similarities or differences between the table and the pie chart in Figure 3?
3. What is the importance and likely effect of these staff issues on the educational system? On students? On the quality of teaching and learning?
4. Who is responsible to address staff emotional and mental health and well-being? How and in what way might an effective response be designed?
5. Is stress adequately appreciated as an emotional/mental health concern among the staff and administration at your school?
6. What kind of resources might be needed and available to address these issues for staff?
7. Given the range of issues principals must address, how can staff mental health become a higher priority?

Appendix II: Discussion questions (continued)

Finding 4: Ministry of Education policies

1. What are the positive and important components of existing policies pertaining to emotional and mental health? How might they be strengthened?
2. What can principals and others do to influence and advocate for regional or national policy concerning staff emotional and mental health?
3. What can principals do at the school level to adopt policies in the absence of a national response?
4. Why is it important to address teacher health and mental health? Why might teacher emotional/mental health and well-being not be perceived as important for education policy makers? How can this situation be changed?
5. Who should take the lead? What can principals, teachers' unions, teachers, and others do to put teacher emotional/mental health and well-being on the national education policy agenda? Who needs to be involved? What would be the best points of leverage for change?

Finding 5: Impact of student family income

1. In your school, what role does family income level play in terms of student emotional/mental health and well-being, academic achievement, and the need for educational materials, training, and other resources? How do the specific issues listed in Figures 4 (a) and (b) align with problems you see in your school and where you feel resources would be best directed?
2. What policy changes at the national or school level could have a positive effect on student and families living in poverty, with benefits to their emotional and mental health?
3. What types of support programs and services could be of immediate help to students in low-income neighborhoods? How can community leaders and non-governmental organizations be involved?
4. What additional types of support might be made available to staff who are dealing with more acute needs of low-income/poverty students and families?

Finding 6: Need for resources and materials

1. Among the identified issues and formats, which are the most important for you and where will you dedicate attention?
2. How can you best use current or new professional staff development opportunities for principal and staff development on these issues? What formats would you prefer?
3. What professional associations, non-governmental organizations, universities or local mental health or social service agencies can you access and partner with to provide needed professional development on student/staff well-being, emotional and mental health?
4. Given the issues identified for staff, what formal and non-formal supports can the principal and others create to alleviate their stress, anxiety, and depression?
5. What actions can country affiliates of ICP play to place this issue higher on the agenda for ICP delivery of events and materials and resources?
6. Have you visited the Intercamhs website (www.intercamhs.org) to find resources there? What else might be needed?

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